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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines, explains, and illustrates the core block model of scheduling, which allows students to spend more time with fewer teachers and encourages greater teacher interaction and ownership in the lives of their students. The core model has been used effectively with advisory programs, drop schedules, and exploratory blocks. It serves as an alternative to interdisciplinary teaming, and provides a workable method for small schools to adopt many researched-based middle level practices. Appended are 17 references and an 11-item annotated bibliography on middle school effectiveness. (Author/JAM)

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THE WASHINGTON CORE MODEL OF MIDDLE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Presented by

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Denver, Colorado

November 10, 1988

Abstract: The core block model of scheduling allows for students to spend more time with fewer teachers and encourages teacher ownership in the lives of students. The core organization has been used effectively with advisory programs, drop schedules, and exploratory blocks. It serves as an alternative to interdisciplinary teaming, and provides a workable method for small schools to adopt many research-based middle level practices.

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II. Goodlad, 1983; Caught in the Middle--California, 1987

Core represents a unified course of studies that ALL students undertake. The core is broad-based, focuses on major issues of civilization, and has as a goal the development of skills in writing, reading, calculating, reasoning and thinking critically. Coursework includes cultural literacy, scientific literacy and knowledge of the humanities.

Clarifying Terminology:

This concept is often mentioned under the rubric of "core curriculum". Recent attempts to define specific student learning objectives address this issue.

Comments: Since this idea asks CONTENT related (or "what") questions, the first questions that come to mind are

(1) What will the core curriculum contain?

(2) Who will decide?

III. Vars, 1987; Wright, 1958

"Core" refers to a multi-period block of time where one teacher shares time with one group of students. Interdisciplinary instruction is encouraged.

Example: A Westward Expansion unit might include engaging in a simulation game on the fur trade rendezvous (history), writing historically accurate letters to relatives back home from the Oregon Trail (writing), and reading Guthrie's THE BIG SKY (reading), all taught by one teacher.

Historical Precedent:
- Junior high block programs of the late 1950's and 1960's
- 7th grade (or 6th grade) transition programs in current junior high schools (middle schools)
- Elementary (and middle school) self-contained classroom programs
- Jefferson Middle School, Olympia, Washington, 1975 - 1988

Commments: This is a PROCESS concept. Any of the inter-disciplinary approaches mentioned can be used within this category.

THE CONCEPT OF CORE: RELATED DEFINITIONS AND FRAMEWORK

"Core", according to Webster, refers to the innermost or essential part. In education, the term has been associated with curriculum, or what is taught, as well as scheduling, or when, by whom, and to whom lessons are delivered.

KEY DEFINITIONS/INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

INTERDISCIPLINARY: This refers to teaching that combines two or more subjects in a single unit or lesson. Within this category are at least three sub-definitions:

1. CURRICULUM CORRELATION: This refers to planning lessons to correlate various subject matter. For instance, an interdisciplinary lesson in social studies and math could combine the buying and selling of stocks (social studies/economics) with graphing the changes in stock prices (math).

2. CURRICULUM FUSION: This refers to labeling courses so that two or more subjects are combined under a different title. For example, an eighth grade block of language arts and social studies could be combined in a two period block called American Studies.

3. CORE CURRICULUM (Vars and Lounsberry Definition): This refers to interdisciplinary teaching in which the main focus is upon analyzing particular social problems.

THE CONCEPT OF CORE: ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS

1. Lounsberry and Vars, 1978; Vars, 1987

Core is a type of interdisciplinary curriculum in which the primary commitment is to help students confront problems and issues of significance to society or to themselves.

Example: A unit entitled "Our Changing Selves" could involve studying the biological changes that accompany puberty (biology and health), changing interpersonal relations (social studies), poems and literature about adolescence (literature), adolescence in art, dance and drama (arts), and body changes as they impact athletic performance (physical education). Core thus involves students and teachers devoting a significant share of the academic day to studying a central problem. Disciplines are used to analyze the problem; not to organize instruction.

Historical Precedent: Col. Francis Parker, 1880's
John Dewey, U. of Chicago Lab School, 1900

Comments: This is the third, and most sophisticated of the interdisciplinary teaching approaches listed on page one. This notion of core focuses on PROCESS,

ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

I. DEPARTMENTALIZATION (see figures 1 through 4)

Historical Precedent: Junior High School (and High School)

Unifying Concept: Courses taught separately; students have separate teachers for each class; school often mapped out by department

Advantages:

1. Ease of scheduling
2. Certification limitations not a problem
3. Assurances of subject matter-competence of staff
4. Departmental meetings and leadership focus on curricular/subject matter concerns
5. Teachers have a low number of preparations

Disadvantages:

1. Teachers are likely to focus on content, not kids
2. Teachers see too many students during the day
3. Students (especially entering ones) are confused and bewildered by the change from one to six or seven teachers
4. Students lack (in the absence of an advisory program) one adult to know and confide in
5. Teacher isolation from peers

Additional Considerations:

1. Competition (and cutting) are likely to undergird athletic and activity programs
2. High school programs and practices are likely to be emulated

SCHEDULE TYPE Departmentalized NO. STUDENTS 150 (6@25)

NO. TEACHERS 7 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Student LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER. \ STD GRP	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	LA	SS	SC	M	PE	EX
2	R	LA	SS	SC	M	PE
3	EX	R	LA	SS	SC	M
4	PE	EX	R	LA	SS	SC
5	M	PE	EX	R	LA	SS
6	SC	M	PE	EX	R	LA
7	SS	SC	M	PE	EX	R

FIGURE 1: DEPARTMENTALIZED, STUDENT, NO MIXING

SCHEDULE TYPE Departmentalized NO. STUDENTS 150 (6 @ 25)

NO. TEACHERS 7 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Teacher LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER.	T_1	T_2	T_3	T_4	T_5	T_6	T_7
1	LA_A	SS_B	SC_C	M_D	PE_E	EX_F	Plan
2	LA_B	SS_C	SC_D	M_E	PE_F	Plan	R_A
3	LA_C	SS_D	SC_E	M_F	Plan	EX_A	R_B
4	LA_D	SS_E	SC_F	Plan	PE_A	EX_B	R_C
5	LA_E	SS_F	Plan	M_A	PE_B	EX_C	R_D
6	LA_F	Plan	SC_A	M_B	PE_C	EX_D	R_E
7	Plan	SS_A	SC_B	M_C	PE_D	EX_E	R_F

FIGURE 2: DEPARTMENTALIZED, TEACHER, NO MIXING

II. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMING (see figures 5 through 8)

Historical Precedent: Middle School Movement of 1970-87
Team Teaching (1970's)
Reference: Alexander and George, 1981

Unifying Concept: A group of students and a group of teachers schooled in various disciplines have responsibility for learning experiences for a block of time For example, four teachers, each schooled in a separate subject (e.g. language arts, social studies, math and science) take responsibility for the instruction of 100 students in a four period block.

Advantages:

1. Staff support system in place with teams
2. Teachers can still teach in major fields (certification problems are minimized)
3. Students have a "home base" in the team
4. Teacher preparations can remain relatively low
5. Modular scheduling/flexible time can be easily employed
6. Field trips/longer activities can be scheduled

Interdisciplinary Team Organization: Disadvantages

1. In absense of separate team planning time, teachers resent the use of individual planning time for team meetings
2. Team personality clashes can impact effectiveness
3. Students can still have four teachers teaching four basic subjects
4. Scheduling common planning times for staff is limiting
5. Departmentalization/subject matter emphasis diminsihes
6. Teachers may still see large numbers of students in a day
7. Small schools have difficulty scheduling
8. Inservice on group process skills is necessary

Additional Considerations:

1. Advisory programs often accompany the team approach; however, these periods may interrupt team time
2. Participartory athletic and activity programs typically follow
3. Elementary rather than high school emphasis is likely after school rather than evening student activities; parent conferences in addition to back-to-school nights

SCHEDULE TYPE Interdisciplinary NO. STUDENTS 150 (6@25)

NO. TEACHERS 10 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Student LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER.	A ↔ B	B ↔ C	C ↔ D	D	E ↔ F	F
1	LA	SS	SC	M	PE	PE
2	M	LA	SS	SC	EX	EX
3	SC	M	LA	SS	LA	SS
4	SS	SC	M	LA	SS	LA
5	EX	EX	PE	PE	R	R
6	PE	PE	R	R	M	SC
7	R	R	EX	EX	SC	M

FIGURE 5: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, STUDENT, SUBJECT ORIENTATION

SCHEDULE TYPE Interdisciplinary NO. STUDENTS 150 (6@25)

NO. TEACHERS 10 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Student LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, TM1 = LA, SS, M & SC, TM2 = LA, SS & R,

TM3 = M & SC

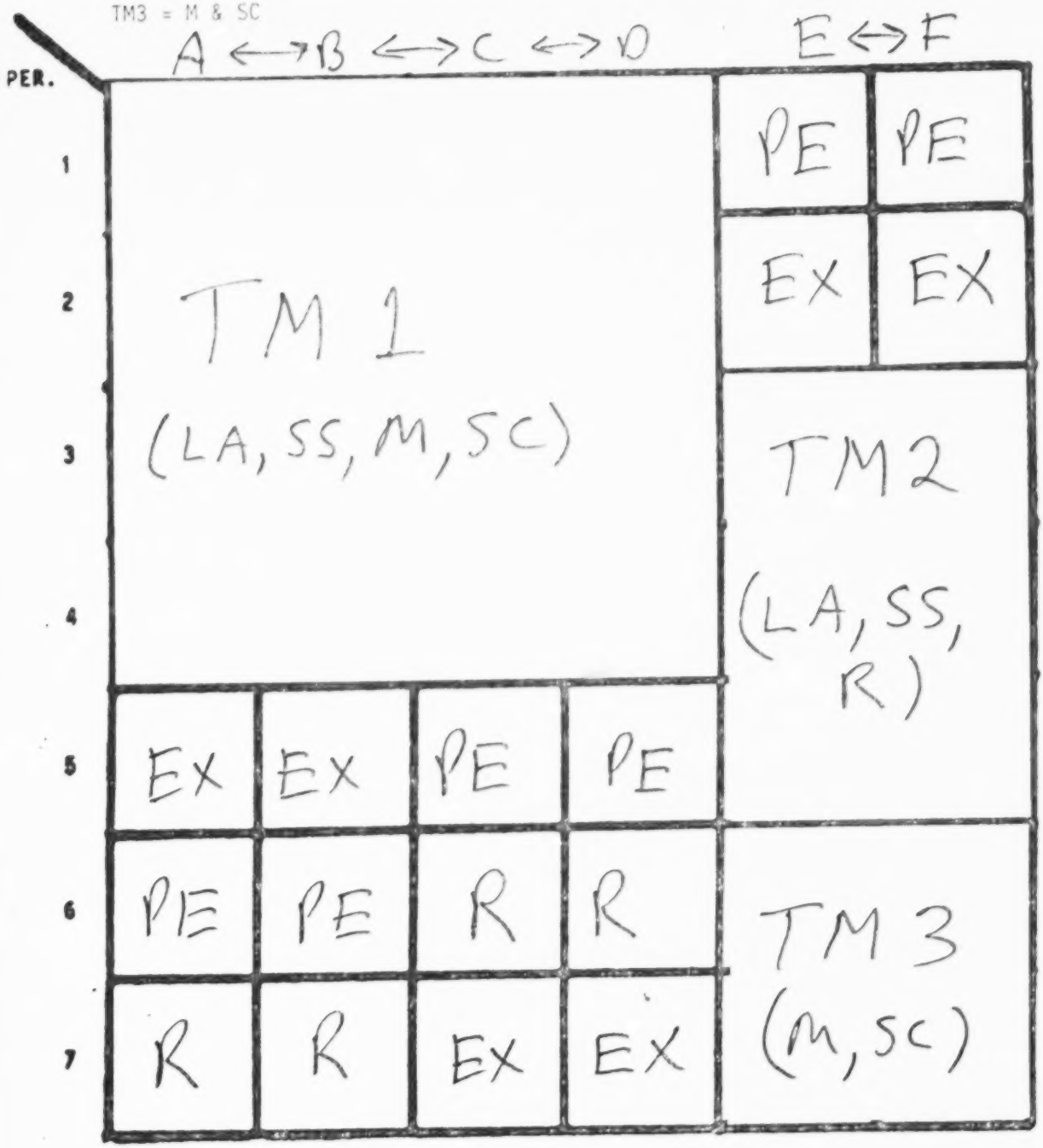

FIGURE 6: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, STUDENT, TEAM ORIENTATION

SCHEDULE TYPE Interdisciplinary NO. STUDENTS 150 (6@25)

NO. TEACHERS 10 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Teacher

LA = LANGUAGE ARTS, SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION, EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, TM1 = LA, SS, SC & M, TM2 = LA, SS & R, TM3 = SC & M, OA = OTHER ASSIGNMENT OR PLANNING

TCH / PER.	T_1	T_2	T_3	T_4	T_5	T_6	T_7	T_8	T_9	T_{10}
1	TM 1 (LA, SS, M, SC) (Group A, B, C, D)				OA	OA	PE E	PE F	OA	OA
2					OA	OA	OA	OA	EX E	EX F
3					TM2 (LA, SS, R) (GROUP E+F)		OA	OA	OA	OA
4							OA	OA	OA	OA
5	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan			PE C	PE D	EX A	EX B
6	R_C	R_D	TM 3 (M, SC) (Group E+F)		OA	OA	PE A	PE B	OA	A
7	R_A	R_B			OA	OA	OA	OA	EX C	EX D

FIGURE 8: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, TEACHER, TEAM ORIENTATION

III. BLOCK TIME (CORE) (see figures 9 through 13)

Historical Precedent: Junior high block programs (1950's)
Self-contained elementary program (K-5, K-6 aor K-8)
Jefferson Middle School, Olympia, Washington, 1975

Unifying Concept: A single teacher and a single class of students are assigned a number of courses over a multi-period block of time

Advantages:

1. Teachers are assigned relatively small numbers of students
2. Teachers "own" students (like elementary school)
3. Parent conferences are easier to arrange (as are progress notes, make-up assignment requests, etc.)
4. Interdisciplinary units are possible without team collaboration
5. Issues of planning time for team meetings are defused
6. Curricular decisions are made by one person (efficiency)
7. Modular scheduling/flexible time possible
8. Field trips/longer activities possible
9. Smaller schools can employ more easily than teaming

Block Time Organization: Disadvantages:

1. Certification restrictions may not allow a multi-period block
2. Content-competence of some teachers may be questioned
3. Teacher isolation may become (remain?) a problem
4. Interdisciplinary units may be less rich without collaboration
5. Parent conference fairness is an issue for block vs. non-block teachers
6. Multiple teacher preparations
7. Discipline/subject matter staff collaboration is minimized
8. Lack of teaming removes peer support system

Additional Considerations:

1. As with teaming, elementary (participation) philosophy on athletics, activities, and parent relationships with the school are likely
2. With lunch and advisory periods within the schedule, some core blocks will have to be interrupted

SCHEDULE TYPE Block-Time (Core) NO. STUDENTS 150 (6@25)

NO. TEACHERS 9 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Student LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER.	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	LA	LA	LA	M	PE	PE
2	SS	SS	SS	SC	M	EX
3	R	R	R	EX	SC	M
4	M	EX	PE	PE	EX	SC
5	SC	M	EX	LA	LA	LA
6	EX	SC	M	SS	SS	SS
7	PE	PE	SC	R	R	R

FIGURE 9: BLOCK-TIME, STUDENT, SUBJECT ORIENTATION

SCHEDULE TYPE Block-Time (Core) NO. STUDENTS 150 (6@25)

NO. TEACHERS 9 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Student LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, B1 = LA, SS & R, B2 = M & SC

PER.	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R	B2 M, SC	PE	PE
2					B2 M, SC	EX
3				EX		B2 M, SC
4	B2 M, S	EX	PE	PE	EX	
5		B2 M, SC	EX	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R
6	EX		B2 M, SC			
7	PE	PE				

FIGURE 10: BLOCK-TIME, STUDENT, CORE ORIENTATION, NO MIXING

SCHEDULE TYPE Block-Time (Core) NO. STUDENTS 150 (6 @ 25)

NO. TEACHERS 9 NO. PERIODS 7

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF Teacher LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, B1 = LA, SS & R, B2 = M & SC, OA = OTHER

ASSIGNMENT OR PLANNING

PER.	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
1	$B1_A$ (LA, SS, R)	$B1_B$ (LA, SS, R)	$B1_C$ (LA, SS, R)	$B2_D$ (M, SC)	Plan	PE E	PE F	OA	OA
2					$B2_E$ (M, SC)	OA	OA	EX F	OA
3				$B2_F$ (M, SC)		OA	OA	EX D	OA
4	Plan	Plan	Plan		$B2_A$ (M, SC)	PE C	PE D	EX B	EX E
5	$B1_D$ (LA, SS, R)	$B1_E$ (LA, SS, R)	$B1_F$ (LA, SS, R)	$B2_B$ (M, SC)		OA	OA	EX C	OA
6					$B2_C$ (M, SC)	OA	OA	EX A	OA
7				Plan		PE A	PE B	OA	OA

FIGURE 11: BLOCK-TIME, TEACHER, CORE ORIENTATION, NO MIXING

ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CHOOSING A MIDDLE LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

I. INTERDISCIPLINARITY

The extent to which a school believes in interdisciplinarity will in large measure determine its optimium organization. A high need for interdisciplianry teaching will result in the choice of teaming or block scheduling. If teaming is chosen, inservice in group process, team management and interpersonal communications is necessary, as is some solution of the team planning time issue.

II. CERTIFICATION

States with permissive or middle school specific certification requirements will enable the establishment of block schedules more easily than those without either. 27 states now have some form of middle level certification, some permissive and others mandatory. States which demand high school-like transcripts for middle school teachers will undoubtedly have to adopt teaming or departmentalization as their model.

Washington recently has changed from rather permissive certification (K-12 likely), to divisions between K-8 generalist and 4-12 specialist effective in August of 1987. Those with certificates issued before that time will be grandfathered. The K-8 limit is scheduled to be further reduced to K-6 in 1992. Block-time programs are therefore likely to be dropped or modified in the next decade.

III. DROP SCHEDULE

Many schools which make middle school transitions from junior high to middle school programs also increase the school day from six to seven periods. In addition, many simultaneously add advisory programs. The change to an eight period day can be overwhelming for staff. The alternative plan has been to employ a drop schedule (see figures 14 and 15). In this case period lengths can be maintained at approximately 55 minutes, a length which typically is popular with activity (PE, industrial arts, science, art) teachers.

SEVEN PERIOD DROP SCHEDULE

8:00	8:51	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	
8:55	9:46	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	
9:50	10:16	ADVISORY							
10:16	10:26	BREAK							
10:26	11:17	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	1st Lunch 11:17 - 11:47
11:21 11:51	12:11 12:41	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	2nd Lunch 12:11 - 12:41
12:46	1:36	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	
1:40	2:30	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	
DROP DAY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

FIGURE 14: SEVEN PERIOD DROP SCHEDULE

FLOATING PERIOD DROP SCHEDULE

PERIOD	TIME	
1.	8:00 to 8:51	
2.	8:55 to 9:46	
Advisory	9:50 to 10:16	
Break	10:16 to 10:26	
3.	10:26 to 11:17	
First 4th	11:21 to 12:11	(Lunch 12:11 to 12:41)
Second 4th	11:51 to 12:41	(Lunch 11:17 to 11:47)
5.	12:46 to 1:36	
6.	1:40 to 2:30	
7.	Rotates into the schedule on drop days. For instance, on "Drop 2" the 7th period class meets from 8:55 to 9:46, time normally assigned to 2nd period.	

FIGURE 15: SEVEN PERIOD DAY FLOATING DROP SCHEDULE

BLOCK TIME PROGRAMS--REFERENCES

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Vars, G. F. (1986). "Integrating Middle Grades Curriculum", TRANSESCENCE, 14 (1), 3-31.

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Wright, G. S (1958). BLOCK-TIME CLASSES AND THE CORE PROGRAM IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, Bulletin 1958, No. 6.

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October, 1987

MIDDLE SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, W. M. (1968). THE EMERGENT MIDDLE SCHOOL. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

William Alexander's classic study has been a benchmark for middle level research and development since its publication. Although intended as a text for beginning middle school teachers, the thrust of the book goes far beyond a methods textbook. Chapters on human growth and development, curriculum, staffing and organization outline what has become the dominant organizational model for today's middle schools. Alexander borrows heavily from real-world school situations to illustrate his points and support his thesis.

Alexander, W. M. and George, P. S. (1981). THE EXEMPLARY MIDDLE SCHOOL. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Picking up where THE EMERGENT MIDDLE SCHOOL left off, this book is often cited as the authortative source of information on the nuts and bolts of establishing a successful middle school. Theory, research and school examples are used to explain such concepts as advisor-advisee, interdisciplinary teams, block scheduling and intramural athletics. This is probably the one book that successfully combines theory and practice in a format that everyone interested in middle schools can use productively.

AN AGENDA FOR EXCELLENCE AT THE MIDDLE LEVEL (1986). Reston, Va: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Middle level experts Al Arth, J. Howard Johnston, John Lounsbury, Conrad Toepfer, and George Melton collaborate on a statement outlining the components which successful middle level schools should maintain. This agenda is painted with a broad brush: the general outline of success is articulated, but specifics are omitted. However, this document provides the student with a brief and succinct list of what ought to be present in good middle level schools.

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: EDUCATIONAL REFORM FOR YOUNG ADOLESCENTS IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1987). Sacramento: California State Department of Education.

This report, written chiefly by James Fenwick and carried out through the work of a task force of middle level educators led by California Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig, reviews the current state of middle level education in California and suggests a number of reforms, all of which are designed to create schools which better meet the needs of middle level students. The report focuses on an analysis of twenty-two principles for successful middle level education and makes recommendations for district and building level implementation of each principle.

Eichorn, D. H. (1966). THE MIDDLE SCHOOL. New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc.

The publication of this book often has been cited as the launching point of the "new" middle school movement. In the mid-1960's the dominant form of middle level organization was the 6-3-3 plan. Eichorn argued that the rapid physical and social/psychological maturation of adolescents in the 1960's pointed to the need for a grade 6-8 plan to most appropriately serve students in the middle. He coined the term "transescent" to describe children in the 10 to 14 age range, and called for a new school organization designed to meet the needs of this particular age group. This book has been recently (1987) reprinted under the auspices of NMSA and NASSP.

Fenwick, J. J. (1986). THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS. San Diego: Fenwick and Associates.

Fenwick analyses middle level education in terms of intellectual, psychological, social, and ethical issues. He calls for the establishment of middle level schools which adhere to six unifying principles: (1) assisting students to develop integrated personalities; (2) providing a curriculum designed to meets needs of students with varying abilities; (3) establishing courses which allow exploration of a wide variety of subject matter; (4) providing strong guidance and counseling opportunities; (5) assuring students of positive socialization experiences, including considering differences in ethnicity, language and national origin; and (6) providing informed guidance as the children search to estaablish positive sex role norms.

George, P. S. & Lawrence, G. (1982). HANDBOOK FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHING. Glenville, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.

For the teacher-practitioner this book fills the void between theory and reality. George and Lawrence go through middle school teaching from philosophical and social/developmental background to content-based teaching strategies. Unlike other books on middle school education, this book is meant to be used rather than read. It belongs on the shelf of any middle level practitioner as a ready reference tool.

George, P. S. & Oldaker, L. L. (1986). EVIDENCE FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL. Columbus: National Middle School Association.

George and Oldaker summarize research on effective middle schools and report on survey results from a study of 130 exemplary middle schools. They conclude that schools which successfully move from junior high to middle school organization report (1) unaffected or modest gains in academic achievement; (2) improvements in discipline and attendance; (3) improvements in school climate and school spirit; (4) enhanced personal and social development of students; (5) higher faculty morale and more positive feelings toward staff development activities; and (6) increased parent involvement and support.

Lipsitz, J. (1984). SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS FOR YOUNG ADOLESCENTS. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, Inc.

Lipsitz' case study of four exceptional middle schools is quickly becoming a classic in the middle school effectiveness literature and a testament to the value of qualitative research as a tool to foster understanding about the nature of schooling. The reader quickly becomes immursed in the lives of the staff and students of her four schools, each of which was chosen to represent success in different situations regarding location, socio-economic status and ethnic balance. The book is extremely well written, and her conclusions, stated in Part III, Recurrent Themes in Successful Middle Schools, are convincing.

Merenbloom, E. Y. (1986). THE TEAM PROCESS IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS. Columbus: National Middle School Association.

Merembloom lays out the rationale for establishing interdisciplinary teams in the middle school and gives a wealth of practical information about starting and maintaining a successful team organization. He uses his experience as a principal of a large middle school to outline methods to develop a schedule which allows teams the flexibility to plan instructional activities around the needs of the students. Hints on block time, flexible scheduling, effective use of planning periods and grouping by ability for instructional purposes are also given.

Tye, K. A. (1985). THE JUNIOR HIGH: A SCHOOL IN SEARCH OF A MISSION. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

This book is often excluded from middle level reference lists, probably because its title misleads middle school researchers and practitioners. However, it represents a summary of probably the most thorough study ever undertaken about the activities of middle level schooling. Tye was a head researcher in John Goodlad's Study of Schooling which involved an exhaustive study of 39 schools from the mid-1970's to the early 1980's. Goodlad's work, of course, is synthesized in A PLACE CALLED SCHOOL (McGraw-Hill, 1984). Tye's efforts focus on the analysis of a voluminous amount of survey findings, on-site visitations, and interviews of staff, students and parents in 12 junior high schools chosen for variety in size, location, socio-economic status and ethnicity. Tye's conclusions and recommendations are interesting, but the main value of the book lies in the specific description of the classroom and non-classroom activities of middle level schools, especially those involving instructional concerns.